

Community Trail Planning Meetings Input Compilation

Dec. 5 & 12, 2016

(Comments were recorded exactly as they were written)

“What Trail User Group(s) Do You Identify With?”

EQUESTRIAN: 7

- Burro run/racer
- Pleasure rider
- Horses
- Horses/cattle/wildlife (doesn't mix with mtb)
- Horses/cattle wildlife (let them have their space)
- We love horses & cows
- Our BLM grazing permit

TRAIL RUNNER: 10

HIKER: 58

- Off trail: 8
- With dogs: 1
- “Quiet” hiker: 2
- “Willing to share with bikers ONLY” & dogs on leash ONLY: 1

Mt. BIKER: 37

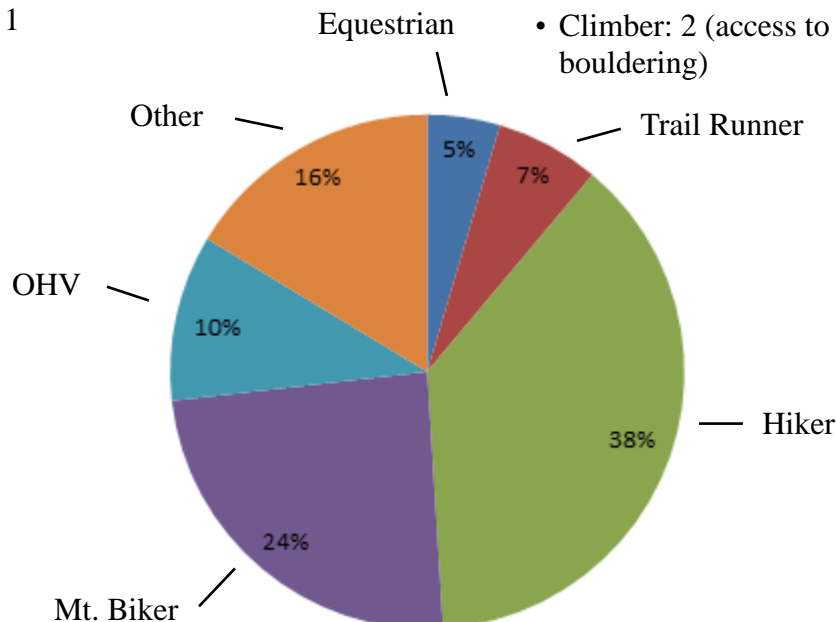
- Trails for seniors: 1
- Beginner: 2
- Intermediate: 1
- Advanced: 1
- XC & all-mountain: 1
- Single & double track: 1
- Cross rider: 1
- Fat biker: 1

OHV: 16

- ATV: 1
- Jeep/truck: 7
(loved jeeping in Fourmile before it became dominated by ATV/dirtbikers)
(used to jeep in Fourmile, but now roads/trails are getting badly eroded)
- Dirt bike/motorcycle: 2
- Snowmobiling: 1

OTHER: 25

- Fisherman: 2
- Rollerblader: 1
- Bushcraft: 1
- Photographer: 2 (1 off trail)
- Hunter: 1
- Birder: 3
- Friends of Fourmile: 2
- Homeowner: 4
- XC Ski: 3
- Snowshoer: 1
- Backpacker: 1
- Quiet space lover: 2 (Nature) (accessible by foot from town)
- Western Pack Burro Racing Assc.: 1
- Climber: 2 (access to rock climbing & bouldering)



“What Area/ Trails Do You Recreate on Most Often?”

TOWN TRAILS: 17

(most list more than 1 trail)

- Peaks View Tr.: 4
- River Walk : 7
- Pump Track: 2
- H.S. Nature Tr.: 1
- Skate Park: 1
- Bike Polo: 1
- All town trails & roads: 9
- Airport Tr.: 1

WHIPPLE/MIDLAND/BROKEN

BOYFRIEND: 47

- Mt. bike/cross ride (specifically): 9
- Hike/trail run(specifically): 9
- Whipple: 1 North... 1 South
- Midland Hill/Sleeping Indian: 5 (“keep the back side quiet”)
- Whipple + Broken Boyfriend: 5
- Whipple + Midland + Bacon Bits: 18
- Everything (including Django & Fistful of Dollars: 6

FOURMILE: 40

- Hike (specifically): 7
- Mt. Bike (specifically): 9 (all-day Epic: 1)
- Trail running (specifically): 1
- OHV (specifically): 1
- Jeep (specifically): 3
- Motorcycle (specifically): 1
- Off trail Hike (specifically): 5
- Bird watch (specifically): 2
- Volunteer with Friends of Fourmile (specifically): 1
- Photographer (specifically): 1
- Camp (specifically): 2
- All system roads: 6
- All of North Fourmile: 1
- Davis Meadow: 6
- Vitamin B: 2
- Aspen Ridge: 2
- Browns Canyon: 2
- Turret Tr.: 1
- Tr. 6045: 1
- Carnage Canyon: 1
- Chinaman Gulch: 1
- Tumble Creek Tr.: 1
- Chubb Park: 1
- Fourmile Creek: 3
- Shields Gulch: 1
- Davis Face Climbers access Tr: 1
- 185D: 1
- 300B:1
- 375: 3
- 376: 2
- 373: 2
- 311: 1
- 1414: 2
- 1415: 1
- 1450: 1
- Colorado Tr – Antero area: 1
- Wilderness: 1
- Collegiate Peaks Wilderness: 1
- Colorado Tr. & Continental Divide Tr.: 1

“What Concerns Do You Have Regarding Our Current Trail System?”

- Bike trails suitable for seniors, tourists, youth, and flatlanders.
- Non-motorized users must avoid 4 mile in summer due to choking dust from use of 4 mile as a motor sports park.
- More and longer loop trails.
- Walk bikes across Ramsour Bridge if you must have bikes.
- Bathroom at 304 trailhead.
- Current trails are unsafe, especially the traffic on 304.
- Our trails lack connectivity. There's very little looping besides gentlemens loop.
- We simply do not have enough trails. We need trails to expand which take users to the various geological formations.
- Our trails are kid unfriendly. There's no gradual buff trail that could take a child from town to 304.
- Would like to see more nature in town trails for those who can't hike the more difficult, higher Whipple/ Midland trails and have them connect to each other. Like have the Harmon easement trail at 361 & 306 connect to into town.
- Would like the lower trail to be developed on the east side of the river be similar to the west side riverwalk so that walkers, rather than hikers are able to use it.
- Need to connect trails and get off roads (make loops).
- Need another bike route in Whipple area to relieve conflicts with hikers, using the Midland bridge is best option.
- More advanced mtn bike trail options. We are losing many potential residents and revenue for this community because of the limited riding options.
- Connectivity within Town and to BLM land and Forest Service trails.
- Maintaining existing and future trails needs before new trails are designated.
- Dogs should be on leash. Danger to animals, bikers, hikers, horses. Dog poop pick up is improving but far from 100%.
- Limited.
- Too steep around Midland.
- 304 is a little scary for bikes v hikers v cars.
- Erosion in 4 mile from motorized vehicles is a serious problem and getting worse every year. We drive to trailheads like Tumblecreek and Davis Meadows and over the 18 years that we have done this, we've seen the whole system denuded of vegetation, overused and turned into watercourses due to recreational off road vehicles in large posses. Ruining the area.
- Now that the USFS can consider new trail proposals I would like to see less pressure on BLM.
- I would like to see trails more bunched in areas that presently have trails and keep trailless areas trailless to promote wildlife and natural ecosystems (birds, native vegetation).
- Because BLM is on the periphery of the 4 mile management area, any new trails will impact home owners.
- I would build new trails on East side of river near BV with consideration of increased traffic into town (parking, etc).
- 2 miles of dedicated hiking needs to be increased.
- More miles of new trails to cut down on congestion.
- Disneyland.
- Current trails are limited, outdated, and hard to run/ride. Too steep in many areas.
- Whipple/ Midland needs filling in to make a really robust hiking/ biking system. Ie Salida Mtn trails, Dale Ball Trails in Sante Fe, people are asking for it.

- Let's preserve the quiet beauty that distinguishes BV. If we make it into a free for all we will lose what makes us special and that is detrimental to our quality of life as well as to our economy in the long run.
- Let's not forget the value of relatively large segments of Fourmile without any trail development. Need to concentrate trails in certain areas.
- Good stewardship is the bottom line. Can't necessarily meet increasing demand indefinitely.
- Economic impact of new trails will be great. Our town needs more trails to help spread out the crowds and give users more variety.
- Have trails on both sides of paved roads not just 1 side.
- No beginner level mtn bike trails. No way for progression from novice to expert.
- Impact on wildlife.
- Names for trails (instead of #'s).
- Level of difficulty signs.
- Names - unless you carry trail system map, which most don't.
- Broken Boyfriend needs signage at 3 junctions.
- Broken Boyfriend should have extension on NE corner to add overlook.
- County fee on bikes greater than or equal to \$500 to fund trail development/ maintenance.
- Education, enforcement of current traffic laws for bikers on roadways.
- More dog poop depository stations and bags.
- Names and rating system for 4x4 full size roads/ trails.
- Stop building social trails and reconnects - reclaim the old trail not just a rock and stick - reseeding and establish new grass - you all wrecked it - fix it like it was.
- Wayfinding from town/ Main St. Difficulty of trails under (maybe need green/ blue/ black system).
- Low altitude trails for hiking during winter/ spring/ fall.
- Danger from hunters in the fl.
- Lack of beginner mtn bike trails.
- Lack of resources/ funding for BLM/USFS rangers.
- Bike/red lane needed on both sides of county roads outside town limits for safe travel (306, 350, 361, 317, Rodeo Rd).
- Connectivity of town trail sections - consistent trail of lanes so not changing from one side to the other.
- Trails to the West, public lands (306, 350 etc). Should be #1 priority for future public safety, access, health and recreation.
- Connectivity is needed to encourage safe bike and pedestrian travel.
- Whipple from BV River Park bridge is far too congested.
- The process will move too slow costing the community and all user groups. Unnecessarily slow bogged down by formalities. Meeting and political lip service, when it actually isn't helping anything.
- We need more connectivity with singletrack, ie ride from the Broken Boyfriend to Fistful of Dollars without riding on road. Singletrack connector would be awesome.
- Education on bike courtesies and rules.
- Impact on wildlife. Should have areas where there are no trails.
- Lack of resources to maintain existing trails.
- Really need bike designated access from river park to railroad grade to minimize bike/ hiker conflict and congestion.
- Funding for trail maintenance.
- Midland grade re-routes 1 and 2 great for bikes, but not liked by equestrian and hikers/ runners. Need more direct alternates through the ravines.

“What is Your Vision for the Future of our Local Public Lands?”

- Equestrian vision: “Who yields to who” signage/ stock containment areas/ tie racks/ good footing (horses can really tear up loose footing)/ branches cut at riders' height/ water crossings should be gradual in & gradual out/ ability to walk 2 abreast at times/ some way to keep horses confined to trail areas & not on roads & highways (like the cattle guard at CR 304)/ take care of downed fences (no cattle guards where we DO want to ride/ re-routes should be more direct/ horses tear up bike trails/ place for trailer parking & turnaround.
- Increased & focused stewardship: Using the peoples' land to the best use for the people & the environment.
- Consistent connectivity of town trails with marked lanes/ connected loops on County roads with lanes on both sides/ more hiking-only trails on Whipple system/ complete Midland Hill Bridge & trails east of the Arkansas river. Maintain existing trails.
- Would like hiking-only trail on Whipple Trail below Sleeping Indian ridge.
- I would like to see quality, sustainable trails and pathways that encourage bike & pedestrian activity and reduce vehicle use.
- Midland Hills Bridge to be built in 2017/ easier mtb routes/ better connectivity in town.
- We hope to have good stewardship amongst all user groups so our trails will remain open. We do not want to be access limited due to irresponsible outdoor behavior. The livelihood of many people in the valley is tied directly to public land access.
- Areas to enjoy quiet, solitude, wildlife raptors & native vegetation. Keep some area (significant size) trailless & roadless. Trails do not have to be everywhere.
- I would like to see a singletrack S. Barbara Whipple along 304 to Fistful of Dollars either side of 304 to get bikes off 304.
- More trail development in areas that already have trails. New trail systems with new trail build concepts to make biking & hiking & running easier and SAFER.
- Connecting bike/hike trails in Midland area.
- A well-built, sustainable trail system that allows residents & visitors to access the surrounding public lands by human-powered means. It should provide a pleasing tour of the surrounding mountains without fragmenting wildlife habitat. People should be able to access & use the system without much need to get into a car.
- Connect, via singletrack, Davis Meadow Trail to Vitamin B/ extend Broken Boyfriend both north & south... north to the tunnels & south to Django/ Chinaman Gulch singletrack: proceed as designed.
- To start & finish the 64-mile Stagecoach Trail/ Connection from Ramsour Bridge to 304 to bypass Ramsour Bridge North.
- Why not work with salida Trail group to form singletrack to connect Bv & salida? How awesome would that be?! Epic!
- It would be nice to split up some mountain biking & hiking trails/ Only one use per trail.
- Extend the River trail (west side of river) north, so that it reaches the timber-built stairs & bench platforms.
- Good, sustainable trails/ people respecting & protecting the land & ecosystems, not leaving trash everywhere, spray-painting rocks, etc...
- Provide a kid-friendly trail to connect town to 304. I strongly recommend Ramsour Bridge with a gradual climb to 304.
- Motorized trails should be in areas away from homes... places such as Arnold Gulch, Bald Mt., etc... that are not near homes.
- Sufficient trails to accountable traffic without need for social trails.
- Protecting the natural environment from high-impact activities like ATVs should be a top priority.

Fourmile is an example of everything done wrong because hikers can't get to trailheads in Buffalo Peaks Wilderness due to excessive erosion of county roads in Fourmile.

- Trails that are not overused/ Trails for people that walk with dogs & trails without dogs.
- Trails are wonderful, but it should be kept in mind that there is a need to preserve wild areas near town to prevent disturbing wildlife such as migrating deer & elk. Corridors should be kept open. Watersheds protected & noise levels kept down.
- Careful, measured development of trails that recognize that good stewardship is the priority & meeting demand may not always lead to good stewardship.
- More hiking trails if possible, including one that circumvents the Sleeping Indian.
- **NON-MOTORIZED!** Fill in BV's trail network east of the river between Whipple & Collegiate Peaks Overlook & Midland Bike Trail. We need a trail system as robust as Salida Mtn Trails. Our landscape is perfect for that.
- I would love to see more mt. Biking trails of all skill ranges, but in particular, more advanced trails!
- Continue to create trails based on community process & buy-in/ All user groups heard & respected.
- I would like to see the entire Divide Trail from Cottonwood Pass south to Tincup road opened to bikes. I would also like to see additional trails from Cottonwood Pass down to Avalanche trailhead & something from Clear Creek Reservoir up through & past Winfield, etc...
- Keep motorized 4X4 trails open by working with user groups to maintain & adopt trails. To have public land managers actively involved in finding & working with these groups instead of limiting or decommissioning access.
- Trails that are designed & constructed to minimize erosion & protect water quality, including education on importance of clean-up after dogs & staying on trails. Good wayfinding signage; no longer rely on brochures that are thrown away.
- I would like to see the town rebuild/revamp the pumptrack with sustainable dirt & expand that section to include a dirt-jump & skills park. This would include novice beginner, all the way to expert level features (jumps, skinnies, pumptrack, wooden features, etc..) This area would need to have access to pressurized water (town) & to use high-tensile dirt for construction. Could include cyclocross course, too. If this means moving it to a new location, so be it./ Beginner trails could be built as a boundary for the park, which we desperately need!!!
- I would like to see town trails expanded... around the dog park & pumptrack & frisbee golf course.
- A plan that focuses first on maintaining current trails including funding for necessary enforcement./ a trail system that respects the wildlife & provides for areas that remain trail-free/ a trail system that supports quiet use/ management of public lands that also respect the private lands that are within that area/ a plan that strikes a balance between growth & recognition of the land's ability to support that growth.
- Have get-around trestles on 2 east trestles/ longer & less steep Midland trail near Shields Gulch.
- Continue meeting & capacity-building/ amend existing trail expansion proposal/ make BV Trails a legit organization, non-profit with employees/ fund trail-building, expansion & enforcement/compliance/ build, maintain, collaborate.
- A plan that enables residents & visitors to enjoy our land while protecting quiet qualities & wildlife & not negatively impacting private landowners. Having a "buffer zone" along residences is important.
- My grand vision is for the Turtle Rock/Split Rock area to be an epicenter for mt. biking and rock climbing. The terrain is incredible for all types of bike trails, from beginner to advanced.
- We hope for a balanced development that responds to recreational demand while not losing sight of the need for stewardship.
- Would like to be able to hike on trails in BLM/Forest Service lands that are closed to hunting. Right now, during rifle season, we are out of luck.
- Develop trail connections between town/Whipple area into Fourmile (Midland, etc...) to minimize

contention between hikers/ mt bikers.

- Please don't forget wildlife impact & local cattle ranching.
- Need trails off roads/ need loops/ need trails connected/ would love to see Broken Boyfriend extended to Midland Trailhead, as well as Ramsour trails extended there, too./ need singletrack along road to Bacon Bits/ More trails disperse users & gives a better experience/ Midland Trail on the USFS land needs some work, erosion problems.
- More & better bike trails than Fruit or Eagle.
- Biking trails as diverse as Fruita or Gunnison. Blues & Blacks, directional loops or In & Outs!
- More hiking trails/ more biking trails/ enjoy/ thanks much.
- Not too many motorized trails near existing bike/hike trails.
- No more new trails/ Rehab the ones that are re-routes & user-created/ Enough is enough!
- Leave it like it WAS... as much as possible. It's becoming an overrun amusement park for the fun hogs. The Federal mandate is: Multiple use & SUSTAINABLE YIELD.
- A vision to preserve some of the undisturbed land. We can't cut it all into trails There is nowhere you can't go on this land. Reclaim the leftover trails – a stick & a rock are not rehabilitation. Leave it for wildlife & us that want to enjoy it. Leave Hop Gulch & Midland Hill alone as it has always been. It's sacred!
- What are you leaving for the next generation to come?
- User groups include off-trail hikers. Future public land use should include areas that are free of trails, so nature can be enjoyed in silence.
- Be respectful of private land/homeowners near trails./ Consider a ½ mile “buffer” between new trails & homes.
- Retaining the natural qualities & allowing individuals the personal freedom to explore & learn on their own terms & schedule.

Other comments

- I suggest recording of proposed and existing trails on Google Earth (I am not advertising for Google, and am not associated with Google). Many trails are already evident on Google Earth. The city can maintain/ change trails and show trail use or status with filler of the same with Google Earth. Google Earth is free.
- Live at west end of Ramsour Bridge. I'm the troll. The (previous owners) spent 20+ years keeping private. While (the current owner) sees #s of 2 legged and 4 legged animals that cross the bridge, a lot he doesn't see. He's not there most of the time. He was amazed at the high use. 50 people, 30 dogs - his own words. He spent a lot making signs to keep vehicles out. People use South Main to park. People always figure a way around rules. Dogs are chasing and generally bothering deer. Animal Refuge. Deer have trouble in winter especially, trying to keep warm. People with dogs do not clean up. Deer disturbed - move a lot during fawn season. Bikes on trails would be a disaster. FS and BLM spend a lot of time policing illegal trails. Please no bikes, use 4 mile area. There are plenty of 4wd roads to ride on. How many of you would like a parade of 50 people and 30 dogs going right in front of your home?
- How have/ will recent/ proposed road or trail closures affect trail work and development plans? Specifically, the recent lawsuit against USFA affecting mostly San Isabel NF around Twin Lakes, may affect ATV/ Truck access for trail work to carry tools and equipment.
- The McGee trail link that the USFS is proposing in 4 mile is irresponsible. It approves a previously unapproved connector, which will only encourage more unapproved destructive trail cutting by recreational off road vehicles. 4 mile should be protected by reducing ATV traffic, not by encouraging more traffic. The whole watershed is being destroyed.

- This correspondence regards the ongoing public scoping of any Buena Vista trails proposals, and is in support of bicycling-specific components of any future proposals. As a member of primarily non-motorized user groups of the local and surrounding Buena Vista trail systems (and the adjoining Fourmile Recreation Area) for the past 22 years, I thank you for the opportunity to provide commentary. My two-plus decades of experiences and observations on our trails, and subsequent requests for them, are as follows:
 - Too few trails available from town, creating congestion and mild user conflicts. More trails are needed throughout the system.
 - Too few *easy to moderate* trails available from town. More trails are needed for beginners, local youth and tourists.
 - Too few connector trails between existing trails, creating overuse of current trail system and mild user conflicts. More connectors are needed throughout entire system to create alternative traffic patterns and disperse impact.
 - Significant bottlenecking at the Barbara Whipple river park bridge as the only access point to trail system from town. Additional bridge/trail access with new trail proposed at Rams-saur bridge would have a tremendously positive impact on the entire system as accessed from town.
 - Trail/route diversity along the Midland Trail is needed. As a railroad grade, the trail is straight and fast in places, yet lacking in visibility creating opposing traffic dangers. Other sections of the Midland have older, poorly designed reroutes that are heavily eroded from overuse and design issues. As with many of our trails, the Midland suffers as a “sole artery” to outer trails and roads and needs alternative routes to disperse impact.

Over just the past two decades of my trail experiences in and around Buena Vista, I have been pleased to witness the establishment of the following events which have directly impacted our trails, and contributed to the increased tourism Buena Vista now enjoys:

- *Adventure Xstream Adventure Race Series*- Buena Vista, annual, hundreds of athletes, families/crews on the trail system.
- *Transrockies Run*- Buena Vista, annual, hundreds of athletes/families, crews based in, direct trail system use.
- *Paddfest*- Buena Vista, annual kayaking festival, hundreds of athletes/families, spectators, BLM camping, trail using and paddling.
- *Leadville Trail 100/Lifetime Race Series*- Leadville, annual, began as small ultra-run in 1983, has grown to almost controversial numbers of cycling and running races with participant numbers in the thousands, not including families and crews. The exposure and influence Buena Vista now experiences each year from these races, just 25 miles away, is enormous. For the two 100 mile editions of the race series alone, the town of Leadville has been known to almost triple its population for the weeks surrounding the events. A percentage of the lodging and training for these racers and families is now hosted by Buena Vista.
- *Collegiate Peaks Trail Run*- Buena Vista, annual, hundreds of runners throughout BV trails system and Fourmile Recreation Area.
- *High school mountain bike racing & middle school cycling club*- Buena Vista/statewide, ongoing/seasonal, an explosion of student participation in Buena Vista and Colorado in just the eight(?) years since its inception. 30-40 Buena Vista student athletes and coaches now

on Buena Vista trails throughout the cycling season- young riders learning trail etiquette and sportsmanship from coaches and volunteers. These riders are receiving weekly experiences and lessons in trail sustainability, responsible riding, and stand to become stewards and ambassadors of our trails, but are currently pounding over the same limited terrain for training and riding.

- *Continued growth of river corridor recreation*- Rafting and kayaking seasons continue to push Buena Vista into record setting tax revenues, annually. These river users *almost always* engage in trail activities as well including running, hiking and cycling.
- Numerous other organized 5 and 10k runs, bike races and hosted high school races throughout the Upper Arkansas River Valley also have direct or indirect trail system impact.

While the above events and organizations utilizing the Buena Vista trail system are welcome and critical components to our growth and economy, they have far outpaced the current capacity of our trail network.

An additional observation that should be noted is the local energy, commitment and responsibility of those behind the non-motorized trail proposals. There is a recent proven track record of leadership and volunteerism surrounding and supporting the development and maintenance of new and existing trails. The time seems right to capture this enthusiasm to ensure commitment to proper trail planning, building, and maintenance thereafter.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the necessity of expanding and improving our trails. Buena Vista has managed to become a venerable outdoor recreation destination for increasing numbers in all trail user groups. My hope is that all stakeholders in this process acknowledge that a more robust trail system is needed to accommodate the number of trail users we are *already experiencing*. My belief is that a failure to meet and properly manage that need, whether due to bureaucracy, politics and/or any few, but vocal community members opposing such efforts will only result in uncontrolled recreation growth and damage to local public resources and private property.